

Spills in the Northwest Territories 2010

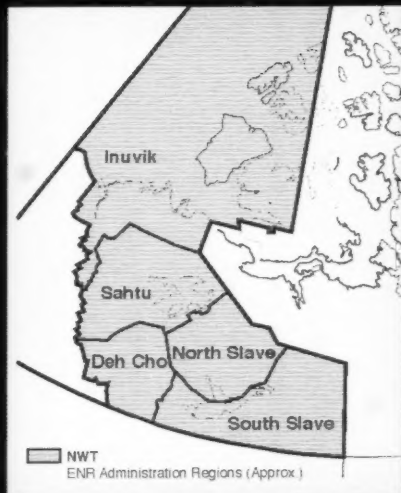


Photo by: NWT Centre for Geography

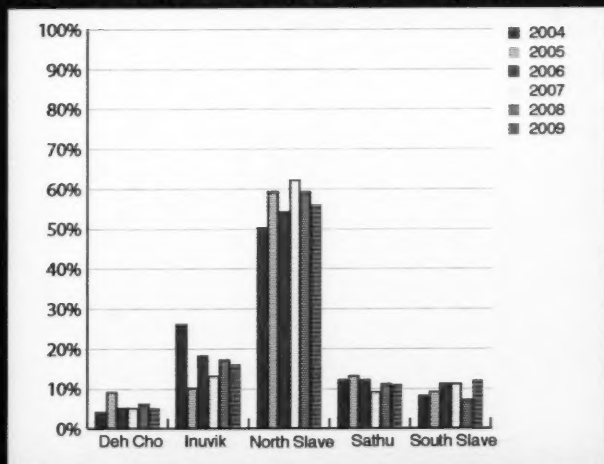
The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) maintains a database of hazardous material spills reported in the Northwest Territories (NWT) since 1971. This report briefly summarizes the data collected for spills reported in 2010.

- 276 spills were reported in 2010, 77 less than 2009.
- 60% of the reported spills were small, less than 100 litres.
- 56% of the spills reported were in the North Slave Region.
- Mining and petroleum spills decreased.
- Government, private individuals, others, unknown parties and transportation spills increased.
- 40% of the spills reported involved fuel oil.
- 1.3 million litres of wastewater was spilled.

Where did the spills occur?

In 2010, 276 spills were reported to the 24-hour Spill Report Line. Over half (56%) of the reported spills occurred in the North Slave Region. The Inuvik Region followed with 16%. South Slave with 12%, Sahtu with 11% and Deh Cho with 5%. Only mining (24%) and petroleum (8%) saw a decrease from a year earlier. Government (24%), private individuals (15%), others (12%), unknown parties (10%) and transportation (7%) saw an increase from 2009. Unknown parties remained the same at 6%. Figure 1 below shows the number of reported spills by region between 2005 and 2010.

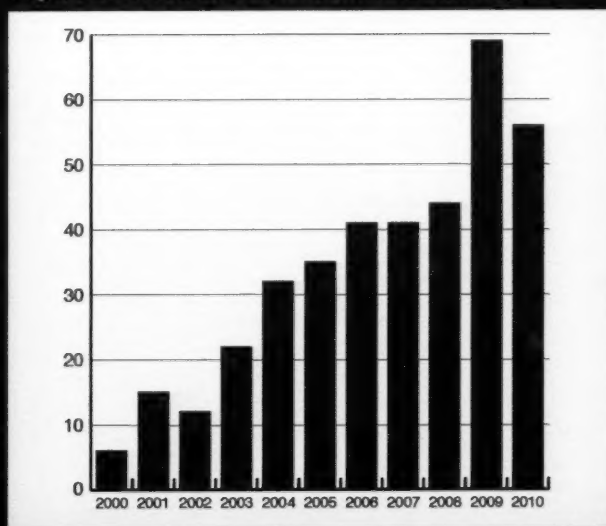
Figure 1 – Number of Reported Spills by Region



Residential oil tank spills

Since 2000, there has been an overall decrease in the number of spills reported in the NWT. Despite this trend, there continues to be a general increase in the number of spills reported from residential-size steel oil tanks (1,135 litres) due to corrosion. ENR recently released the Homeowner's Guide to Oil Tanks to provide homeowners with some simple, practical steps that can minimize the chances of an oil spill. Visit www.enr.gov.nt.ca or call (867) 873-7654 for a free copy.

Figure 2 – Number of Residential Oil Tank Spills



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What was spilled?

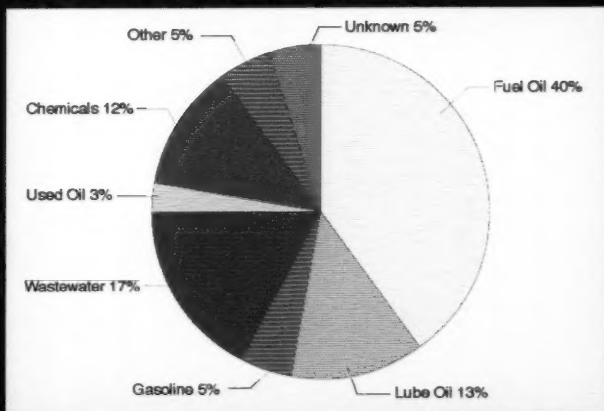
Fuel oil, which includes diesel and heating fuel, accounted for 40% of the spills reported. Up 4% from 2009, but only a slight increase in volume spilled in 2009 (25,693 litres).

Lubricating oil spills decreased by 12% from the previous year. Most of these reports involved heavy equipment haul trucks and smaller industrial vehicles such as pick-ups hydraulic, leaking engine and transmission fluids.

Wastewater, including sewage, produced water (salty wastewater brought to the surface during oil and gas extraction), mine tailings, fine processed kimberlite from diamond mines and fresh water was responsible for 17% of reported spills. In 2010, there were fewer wastewater spills and one third the volume reportedly spilled in 2009 (3,875,927).

Figure 3 shows the number of spills reported by product categories.

Figure 3 – Number of Spills by Product



For more information on spills, contact:

Environment Division
Department of Environment and Natural Resources
Government of the Northwest Territories
P.O. Box 1320
Yellowknife NT X1A 2L9
Telephone: (867) 873-7654
Facsimile: (867) 873-0221
Web site:
<http://www.enr.gov.nt.ca>

How much was spilled?

Six of the nine product volumes spilled were less than the five-year average.

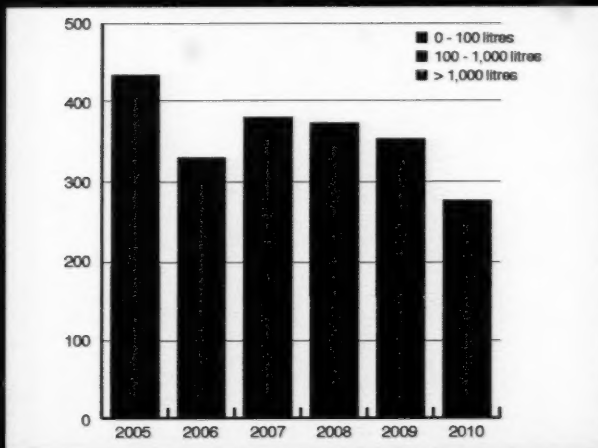
Table 1 – Volume Spilled (Litres)

	2010	5-year Average (2005-2009)
Wastewater	1,270,395	4,599,252
Chemicals	333,630	15,351
Gasoline	32,883	1,382
Fuel Oil	29,940	72,626
Other (crude oil, drill mud)	11,071	33,760
Lube Oil	6,156	32,381
Used Oil	4,975	538
Unknown	5	273
Natural Gas*	0 m ³	1,000 m ³

* Released to air and reported in cubic metres (m³). May contain hydrogen sulphide.

* Natural Gas* is separated from "Others" to show volume.

Figure 4 – Number of Spills and Size



Over half (60%) of the spills reported were less than 100 litres.

To report a spill, call the
24-hour Spill Report Line
(867) 920-8130

(Collect calls accepted.)